

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANILA

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, RP

SUBJECT: MILITARY BASE NEGOTIATIONS: MELCHOR'S VIEWS

REFS: A) STATE 206810 DTG 2923117 AUG 75; B) MANILA

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1. OWING TO UNAVOIDABLE ABSENCE ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB, GLEYSTEEN HOSTED LUNCHEON FOR MELCHOR SEPTEMBER 5. MELCHOR EXPLAINED THAT SOME CONFUSION HAD ARISEN FROM HIS APPROACH TO SECDEF IN SEOUL REGARDING POSSIBLE ARTICLE III CONSULTATIONS. SINCE HE HAD NOT OBTAINED PRIOR CLEARANCE FROM MARCOS FOR HIS PAPER, HE HAD INTENDED ONLY INFOFMAIL APPROACH TO JOG US INTO EXPEDITIOUS RELEASE OF FORMER VIET-NAM EQUIPMENT TO GOP. HE STATED QUITE BLUNTLY HIS SUSPICION THAT WE HAD DELIBERATELY DELAYED ACTION ON THIS EQUIPMENT IN ORDER TO USE IT AS BARGAINING CHIP IN BASES NEGOTIATIONS. GLEYSTEEN DENIED THIS EXPLAINING BUREAU-CRATIC PROCESSES AND PROBLEMS IN THAILAND WHICH HAD DELAYED OUR OFFER OF FORMER VIET-NAM EQUIPMENT TO GOP AND OTHER GOVERNMENTS. HE ALSO RECOUNTED OBVIOUS REASONS WHY ARTICLE III CONSULTATION WOULD NOT BE INTEREST OF CONFIDENTIAL

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GOP.

2. AFTER REITERING MARCOS' RECENT REASSURANCE ABOUT CONTINUING HOSPITALITY TO US MILITARY FORCES IN THE PHILIPPINES, MELCHOR ASKED IF GLEYSTEEN HAD EXAMINED BROCHURE HE HAD GIVEN SENATORS MANSFIELD AND INOUYE, SECDEF AND ELLSWORTH. (HE SAID MANSFIELD AND VALEO HAD PROMISED FAVORABLE MENTION OF BROCHURE IN THEIR TRIP REPORT.) GLEYSTEEN REPLIED THAT HE HAD ONLY JUST RECEIVED BROCHURE THAT MORNING AND HAD GLANCED THROUGH IT. HE SAID THAT USG APPRECIATED PHILIPPINE DESIRE TO GIVE OUR BASES A COMPLEXION MORE IN KEEPING WITH CURRENT GOP FOREIGN POLICY STANCE AS WELL AS LONG RANGE PROBLEM OF ULTIMATE DISPOSITION OF BASES. BUT CONCEPT AS PRESENTED IN THE BROCHURE WOULD ALMOST SURELY CAUSE US GREAT DIFFICULTIES AND IMPINGE ON OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES OF OUR FORCES.

3. GLEYSTEEN ASKED ABOUT TIMING OF IMPLEMENTATION OF BROCHURE PROPOSALS. MELCHOR REPLIED THAT MARCOS WAS THINKING IN TERMS OF IMPLEMENTATION IN 5 YEARS WHILE AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN HAD SUGGESTED 10 YEARS. MARCOS WOULD BE HIGHLY PRACTICAL IN REACHING AGREEMENT. MELCHOR SUGGESTED THAT AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED NOW ON THE OVERALL CONCEPT OF FILIPINIZATION AND MULTI-PURPOSE USE OF THE BASES. THOSE PORTIONS OF EACH BASE NEEDED BY THE U.S. FORCES COULD BE EARMARKED FOR THEIR USE FOR AS LONG AS NECESSARY WHILE FOR THOSE SECTORS NOT NEEDED BY U.S. FORCES COULD BE USED BY PHILIPPINE FORCES OR CONVERTED INTO COMMERCIAL AND CIVILIAN USE BEGINNING RELATIVELY SOON. IN OTHER WORDS, THERE COULD BE VARYING TIME-TABLES FOR CONVERSION OF VARIOUS BASE SECTORS DEPENDING ON DEGREE OF CURRENT UTILITY TO U.S. FORCES. MELCHOR SAID HE HAD TALKED TO RETIRED ADMIRAL MC CAIN AND OTHER U.S. OFFICERS WHO ACCEPTED THE CONCEPT AS LOGICAL AND DESIRABLE.

4. REGARDING COMMERCIALIZATION MELCHOR SAID ORIGINALLY HIS THOUGHT HAD BEEN TO OBTAIN THE SERVICES OF AN AMERICAN FIRM IN CONSULTING CAPACITY BUT IN VIEW OF FACT THAT MANY FIRMS ARE NOW INTERESTED HE WAS THINKING OF CONFIDENTIAL

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OBTAINING SERVICES OF A BOARD OF RETIRED AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICERS, BUSINESSMEN, AND FILIPINOS. HE SAID IN VIEW OF GLEYSTEEN'S REACTION TO THE BROCHURE HE THOUGHT PERHAPS HE WOULD RE-DO IT AFTER RETURNING TO MANILA.

5. MELCHOR INDICATED THAT IF USG AND GOP COULD AGREE ON BASIC OBJECTIVES OF BASE NEGOTIATIONS IT OWULD BE

ADVANTAGEOUS FOR USG TO MAKE THE INITIAL PROPOSALS.
GLEYSTEEN REPLIED THAT WE WERE NOT IN POSITION MAKE ANY
PROPOSALS UNTIL WE RECEIVED CLEAR AND AUTHORITATIVE
STATEMENT OF SPECIFIC GOP DESIRES. SUCH A DOCUMENT HAD

BEEN PROMISED BY MARCOS FOR DELIVERY TO SULLIVAN THIS
WEEK. MELCHOR DID NOT APPEAR FAMILIAR WITH THAT GAMBIT.
MAW

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